

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL**

DATE: AUGUST 28, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors VanNess
Bentley
Belden
Haskell
Barody
Geraghty
Girard

Others Present:

Marvin Lemery, Fire Prevention & Building
Code Enforcement Administrator
Gary Scidmore, Emergency Medical
Services Coordinator
Joan Parsons, Commissioner of
Administrative & Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk
Supervisor Stec
Supervisor Mason
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office
Specialist

Mr. VanNess called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Geraghty, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Marvin Lemery, Fire Prevention & Building Code Enforcement Administrator, distributed an Agenda packet to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Lemery began his review with Agenda Item I, Building Codes. He noted the Monthly Activity Report showed the permit totals were 7% higher than the previous year's totals, and the revenue was up by 8%. As the Fall season began, he said, the number of permits issued tended to increase and he expected another banner year for the Building Code Department.

Mrs. Parsons entered the meeting at 10:34 a.m.

Next, Mr. Lemery reported on Agenda Item II, Fire Prevention & Control, A. Training Center, and he said he met with all of the prospective bidders and reviewed the RFP (request for proposal). He mentioned the bids would be opened on Friday, September 1, 2006, at the Municipal Center.

In addition, Mr. Lemery explained, that both the Warren and Washington County Training Center Committees had visited a training center in Sullivan County prior to issuing the RFP. He said they also visited the New York City Fire Department's Training Academy. The visits provided them with a wealth of information, he said, with regards to building design and size.

Messrs. Stec and Mason entered the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

As for Item II B, Grant Information, Mr. Lemery reported the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant had \$3 million to distribute against 266 applications, and only 26 were funded. Unfortunately, he said, the Warren & Washington Counties' application was not one of the them.

However, Mr. Lemery explained, a second grant pool had been established, with \$35 million available. He said he had consulted with a number of people in Albany and learned that the application from Warren & Washington Counties had a strong chance of being funded this time. Therefore, he said, he requested authorization to re-submit the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant application and noted the same grant writer (Laberge Group) had agreed to update the application at 50% of the original cost.

A brief discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley, and carried by majority vote to authorize the Shared Municipal Services Incentive Grant application be submitted; and authorized a contract with Laberge Group, in an amount to be determined, for grant writing services. Mr. Barody was opposed. The Committee authorized the necessary resolutions be prepared for the September Board meeting. *[Subsequent to the meeting it was determined additional information was needed for Committee review; will be carried as a pending item.]*

Mrs. Parsons left the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Mr. Barody said he was concerned the County would be re-submitting the same application, written by the same individuals (without any indication as to why the first one failed) and would get the same results.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Lemery confirmed that he would obtain as much information as possible with regards to the denial of the original application.

Mr. Lemery referred to the Budgets included with the Agenda packet. He said the Fire Prevention and Control Budget (A.3410) showed a 2007 request of \$75,756, as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$136,283.92 for a decrease of \$60,527.92. He explained the Personal Services (.1 accounts) had been left to the discretion of the Budget Officer and the 400-S Contractual 2007 request of \$51,175 did not include Capital Project funds for the Training Center.

Continuing, Mr. Lemery explained that in previous years, Capital Project funds had

been appropriated (\$20,000 in 2004 & 50,000 in 2005) which had also been matched by Washington County. To date, he said, \$2,000 had been expended, although the engineering RFP would be opened on Friday, September 1st. After an engineering firm was hired, he said, there may be a need to consult with the Budget Officer before the budget was adopted.

Mr. Belden said he agreed with Mr. Lemery's suggestion to wait until the engineering firm was hired.

Mr. Lemery queried whether or not any of the Tobacco Funds would be available for the Training Center.

Mr. VanNess said he would consult with the Commissioner of Administrative and Fiscal Services in that regard.

Mr. Lemery pointed out the A.3410 Budget included a request for salary change for the Fire Coordinator. He said he had conducted a brief survey of like-size counties and he directed attention to a salary comparison chart included with the Budget. He explained the fire coordinators at each of the listed counties worked full-time, rather than part-time, as in Warren County. However, he mentioned, the full-time job duties were the same duties that he performed as a part-time fire coordinator for Warren County.

Mr. Lemery commented that he would like to remain a part-time fire coordinator although he stated that in the "not too distant future" the County may need to fill his position. He pointed out that his current salary was approximately \$5,000 less than when his predecessor, Leslie Hillis, retired in 1987, at \$14,500. In addition, he stated the job duties in 2006 had grown tremendously since 1987.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the Fire Prevention & Control Budget (A.3410) as presented, along with the salary increase request, and authorized the Committee Chairman to sign the Budget and forward same to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Lemery said the Arson Awareness Budget (A.3420) showed a 2007 request of \$1,200 as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$1,600, for a \$400 decrease. He stated this budget was used to pay the rental on the copier machine and office supplies.

Mr. Haskell queried whether or not the Arson Awareness Budget could be merged with the Fire Prevention & Control Budget.

Mrs. Parsons re-entered the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Mr. Barody acknowledged that Mrs. Parsons was now in attendance and he apprized her of the discussion on the Arson Awareness Budget.

In response, Mrs. Parsons explained that if there was no revenue source for the account, there was no particular reason why a separate budget was necessary.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Lemery observed that the Committee's suggestion was to zero out the Arson Awareness Budget (A.3420) and move the funds over to the Fire Prevention & Control Budget (A.3410).

Motion was made by Mr. Girard, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to approve the Arson Awareness Budget (A.3420) be zeroed out and the Fire Prevention & Control Budget (A.3410) be increased by the same line item amounts.

Mr. Belden amended his motion to accept the Fire Prevention & Control Budget (A.3410) *as amended to include the Arson Awareness Budget line items*, along with the requested salary increase. Mr. Bentley seconded the amended motion; and the motion was carried unanimously; the Committee Chairman was authorized to sign the Budget and forward same to the Budget Officer

Mr. Lemery said the Building & Fire Code Budget (A.3620) showed a 2007 request of \$287,144.00 as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$245,726.00 for an increase of \$41,418.00 due to automobile expenses and mileage reimbursement. He explained the Budget at .421 Equipment Rental reflected a 2007 request of \$9,000.00 as compared to the 2006 appropriation of \$0.00, for an increase of \$9,000.00 to cover the leasing fees for three vehicles.

Mr. Lemery reminded the Committee of discussions at earlier meetings with regards to the increase in the number of building permits issued, which also meant an increase in the Building Inspectors' travel to conduct the inspections. He said the Mileage Reimbursement for 2007 had been estimated at approximately \$26,000, as compared to \$18,000 to \$22,000 in years past.

Mr. Lemery stated the estimated costs to lease, insure and provide fuel for three vehicles would save the County approximately \$6,891 per year. He said the estimated savings included a 10% increase in fuel costs.

Mr. Belden said he felt it would be more cost effective to purchase the vehicles, rather than lease them for a three-year period.

Mr. Lemery said he understood the Town of Queensberry maintained their own vehicles and used them for five to six years. He observed the County could expect the same results with a good maintenance program.

However, Mr. Lemery estimated, that the costs to purchase the vehicles would require \$50,000 to \$60,000, rather than the \$9,000 lease fees.

Following a brief discussion, Mrs. Parsons pointed out that other Departments had

found the Jeep Liberty, 4-wheel drive vehicle, was reasonably priced under State contract. She agreed to obtain the pricing on the purchase of three small, 4-wheel drive vehicles, and consult with Mr. Lemery on the results.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried by majority vote to authorize the purchase of three small 4-wheel drive vehicles to be used by the Building Inspectors. Mr. Haskell was opposed.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to accept the Building & Fire Code Budget (A.3620), as amended regarding the purchase of three vehicles, and authorized the Committee Chairman to sign the Budget and forward same to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Lemery reported the Homeland Security Budget (A.3645) showed a 2007 request of \$40,160.00 as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$56,895.36 for a decrease of \$16,735.36 due to the current level of federal and state funding. He reminded the Committee of the temporary storage arrangements for the trailer and tow vehicle. [The trailer at the City of Glens Falls Fire Department's, Broad Street Station, and the tow vehicle at the South Queensbury Volunteer Fire Department.]

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Geraghty and carried unanimously to accept the Homeland Security Budget (A.3645), as presented, and authorized the Committee Chairman to sign the Budget and forward same to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Lemery presented the Emergency Medical Service Budget (A.4022) which showed a 2007 request of \$31,008.00 as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$27,058.00 for an increase of \$3,950.00 due to increases in the contractual (.4 codes) and equipment (.2 codes). He reminded the Committee members that 30% of the EMS Budget was reimbursed from the Public Health Department.

Mr. Lemery further noted the EMS Budget (A.4022) included a salary increase for both the EMS Coordinator and the 1st Deputy EMS Coordinator. He pointed out the requested increases would bring the salaries in line with those of the Fire Coordinator and the 1st Deputy Fire Coordinator.

Mr. VanNess said he understood Mr. Scidmore had obtained some information on comparable salaries with similar sized counties.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Gary Scidmore, EMS Coordinator, who reported the EMS Coordinator in Saratoga and Washington Counties each received a salary of \$7,600. However, he said, in Clinton County, the salary was \$15,000. He said he expected several other counties would also respond to the e-mail poll he recently sent.

Mr. Scidmore mentioned the duties and responsibilities had grown tremendously in the eleven years he had held this position. He distributed an outline of the EMS

Coordinator's Duties and Responsibilities to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes. He said his goal was to have Warren County EMS serve as a leader for other counties, not a follower.

Mr. VanNess said he felt it was important to report that he personally observed the EMS group function during the Ethan Allen incident in 2006. He said he had been impressed at how well the site management all came together.

Mr. Belden said he would prefer to see the salary increase be split over a two year period.

Mr. Geraghty concurred with Mr. Scidmore's comments regarding the evolution of the duties and responsibilities associated with the EMS personnel.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the Emergency Medical Service Budget (A.4022), as presented, and authorized the Committee Chairman to sign the Budget and forward same to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Lemery apprized that a staff member was currently out on medical leave and was not expected to return to work. He explained the staff member currently held two part-time positions, one as a Deputy Fire Coordinator and the other as a Fire Safety Inspector (part-time). He said he would like to fill the part-time Fire Safety Inspector position as soon as the formal resignation was tendered.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to authorize the anticipated Intent to Fill Vacant Position of Fire Safety Inspector. *[Subsequent to the meeting it was determined the anticipated vacancy would be carried as a pending item.]*

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Geraghty, Mr. VanNess adjourned the meeting at 11:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist